

**Fairfax Area Disability Services Board (FA-DSB)  
February 9, 2015 Meeting Minutes  
12000 Government Center Parkway, Conference Rooms 2/3**

**FA-DSB Members in Attendance:**

*Harriet Epstein, Providence District  
Jacqueline Browne, Mason District  
Tapan Banerjee, Chair, Dranesville District  
Tim Lavelle, Secretary, At-Large  
Donald Kissinger, Jr., Springfield District  
Alexandra Dixon, At Large  
Michelle 'Cookie' Hymer Blitz, Hunter Mill District  
Mark Farage, City of Fairfax*

**Absent FA-DSB Members:**

*Leeann Alberts, At-Large  
Kelly Greenwood, Vice Chair, Mt. Vernon District  
Petra Osborne, At Large  
Linda Collins, Braddock District*

**Others Present:** Carl Varner-Fairfax County Department of Family Services' Disability Services Planning and Development. Bruce McFarlane-Fairfax County Office of Emergency Management. Doris Ray- ENDependence Center of Northern Virginia (ECNV). Tom Bash-Springfield District, Fairfax Area Commission on Aging.

**Adoption of Minutes and Agenda:** The agenda was amended to postpone the Strategic Planning discussion and adopted unanimously by the board along with the November 2014 meeting minutes.

**Public Comment:** Staff is encouraging more public input by publicizing meetings in the "Access Fairfax" E-Newsletter, and on the Fairfax County Disabilities Facebook page.

**FA-DSB's Strategic Planning Priorities and Initiatives for 2015:** Postponed for an upcoming meeting.

**Committee Reports:**

- **Emergency Preparedness:** Bruce McFarlane reported that Fairfax Alerts currently has over 11,000 registrants, and the Medical Needs Registry (MNR) has 586 with 39 new MNR registrants since November. Both Fairfax Alerts and the MNR assist with sheltering in place and evacuation before, during or after an emergency, and will continue to be maintained and advertised to county residents. The utility of the MNR will remain questionable until it is updated with a searchable database.

Tom Bash made a presentation to the FA-DSB on Smart 911. A motion was made and adopted for the FA-DSB to send a letter to the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors encouraging it to seriously consider the potential use of Smart 911. Jackie Browne inquired about the county's first responders' stance on Smart 911. Bruce McFarlane indicated that the 911 Call Center is not against Smart 911, but suggested that Smart 911 advocates collaborate with first responders to attempt to allay some of their concerns.

- **Housing:** Michelle 'Cookie' Hymer Blitz described the purpose of the Consolidated Community Funding Advisory Committee (CCFAC), to which she is the FA-DSB liaison. She reported that \$600,000 of new FY 2016 Community Development Block Grant funds were allocated for the development, preservation, acquisition, modification and rehabilitation of housing and facilities to serve "Special Needs Housing" including people who are homeless, have disabilities, low income, older adults, large families with limited housing options, and people who are rent burdened and/or victims of domestic violence. She also indicated that some FY 2015 carryover funds are available for similar purposes through Fairfax County's "HOME" program. Cookie reported that Kurt Creager was recently appointed as the new Director of the Department of Housing and Community Development, and recommended that the FA-DSB with him soon.

Carl Varner provided an update on the Accessibility Guide for Home Modifications that is being developed as part of The Fairfax County 50+ Community Action Plan, and said that the FA-DSB will have the opportunity to review a draft version of the guide before it is finalized.

- **Mobility and Transportation Committee:** Don and Alexandra reported that the committee has focused on establishing tighter statewide regulations for Transportation Network Companies (TNCs) like Uber and Lyft to accommodate people with disabilities. The bill that passed the General Assembly fails to provide any such protections and also gives authority to the DMV to be responsible for oversight of TNCs, prohibiting localities from having more stringent requirements to meet local needs.
- **Americans with Disabilities Act:** Leeann Alberts recently agreed to chair the FA-DSB's ADA Committee. She will be scheduling a meeting for the ADA Committee in the next few weeks with a focus on accessible parking reserved for people with disabilities, and welcomes other suggestions from board members. Tapan Banerjee would like to invite Ken Fredgren from the Reston Accessibility Committee to present its mission and activities to the FA-DSB at an upcoming meeting.

#### **Chair's Items:**

Attention was brought to the list of FA-DSB vacancies on Other Advisory Boards that need to be filled. Since the FA-DSB has a reduced meeting schedule, additional committee work is needed in between meetings.

Tapan shared his vision of an action plan where board members would take on specific advocacy activities and regularly provide status updates to the board. This will be discussed in further detail at an upcoming meeting.

Tapan asked for a list of meeting attendance to support regular participation by FA-DSB members.

#### **Staff/Member Reports:**

- **ABLE Act:** Staff provided an overview of the legislation, which allows low income people with disabilities to save money for education, housing, employment and other services without penalty.
- **County Budget:** Fairfax County's proposed budget items pertaining to residents with disabilities will be presented to the FA-DSB in March and they will be asked to provide input into the budget process.
- **25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act—July 2015:** The FA-DSB wants to celebrate the ADA's anniversary but will discuss specifics at a future meeting. Doris Ray suggested that the board commemorate the occasion in partnership with ECNV.
- **Harriet Epstein** reported that she has a newfound respect for barriers to accessibility because of a recent ankle injury, and said that she believes the accessibility of the Providence Community Center is insufficient. She is concerned because 1) the drop off location is on a curve in the road where it is difficult for other drivers to see, 2) the path from the curb to the door is on a slope, and it is a long path with no railing, and 3) the distance from the accessible parking spaces to the main entry is quite far. Tapan suggested that the FA-DSB take a look at the accessibility of the Providence Center.
- **Mark Farage** spoke about a recent Cross Roads Adaptive Sports event supporting Wounded Warriors. FA-DSB members would like to know more about this organization at a future meeting.

**Adjournment:** 9:05 p.m.